

**In the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (original) Ceramic plates for side dams of twin-drum continuous strip casters; comprising a REAG phase of 10 to 90 vol.%, a Sialon phase of 5 to 50 vol.% and a BN phase of 5 to 50 vol.%.

2. (original) Ceramic plates for side dams of twin-drum continuous strip coasters; comprising a REAG phase of 10 to 90 vol.%, a Sialon phase of 5 to 50 vol.%, a BN phase of 5 to 50 vol.% and an amorphous phase of more than 0 to not greater than 20 vol.%.

3. (Currently amended) Ceramic plates for side dams of twin-drum continuous strip casters ~~according to claim 1 or 2~~, in which said REAG phase comprises at least one rare-earth aluminum garnet phase selected from YAG, ErAG, YbAG and DyAG phases.

4. (Currently amended) Ceramic plates for side dams of twin-drum continuous strip casters according to ~~any of claims claim 1 to 3~~, in which the value of Z, in the chemical formula  $\text{Si}_{6-z}\text{Al}_z\text{O}_z\text{N}_{8-z}$  of said Sialon phase, in between 0.05 and 1.9.

5. (Currently amended) Ceramic plates for side dams of twin-drum continuous strip casters according to ~~any of claims claim 1 to 4~~, in which said ceramic plates have a relative density of not less than 80 %.